INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

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CONTROL: FR 88
RECD: JUNE 15, 1955
8:23 A.M.

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FROM: TAIPEI

TO: SECRETARY OF STATE

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NO. 906, JUNE 15, 5 P.M.

DEPT ALSO PASS CINCPAC FOR INFORMATION.

DEPTEL 686 AND 751, EMBTEL 806.

AFTER RECEIPT OF FIRST REFERENCE TELEGRAM RE PRIOR US AGREEMENT FOR GRC BOMBING OF FUKIEN AIRFIELDS I CONVEYED SUBSTANCE OF DEPARTMENT'S POSITION TO FOREIGN MINISTER AND REQUESTED INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT CHIANG WHERE THREE OF US COULD DISCUSS MATTER. HE IMMEDIATELY INFORMED PRESIDENT OF DEPARTMENT'S ATTITUDE AND I HAVE SINCE REFERRED TO MATTER IN CONVERSATIONS WITH CHIANG ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS. HOWEVER, PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL INSPECTIONS OF MILITARY ESTABLISHMENTS AND SPATE OF US OFFICIAL VISITORS RESULTED IN OTHERS BEING PRESENT BEFORE WHOM IT WAS PREFERABLE TO AVOID DETAILED DISCUSSION. SHORTLY BEFORE SECOND REFERENCE TELEGRAM WAS RECEIVED I LEARNED PRESIDENT WOULD SEE ME THIS MORNING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER BEFORE LATTER'S DEPARTURE FOR SAN FRANCISCO LATER TODAY.

MEANWHILE I TOOK PRECAUTION ON JUNE 9 OF SUMMARIZING DEPARTMENT'S POSITION IN MEMO TO FOREIGN MINISTER WHICH CHIANG TODAY TOLD ME HAD PASSED ON TO HIM.

IN THIS MORNING'S CONVERSATION I STATED ONCE MORE US POSITION THAT OFFENSIVE ACTION BY GRC AGAINST FUKIEN AIRFIELDS REQUIRES OUR PRIOR AGREEMENT EXCEPT IN CLEAR-CUT CASE OF RETALIATION.

I WENT ON TO SAY THAT WITHOUT IN ANY WAY DILUTING US POSITION AS STATED, IT WOULD SEEM TO ME UNFORTUNATE FOR OUR GOVERNMENTS TO BECOME INVOLVED IN ARGUMENT OVER HYPOTHETICAL CASE.

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FACT THAT FUKIEN AIRFIELDS IN QUESTION ARE NEAR SEACOAST AND VULNERABLE TO ATTACK SUGGEST THEIR PRIMARY PURPOSE IS FOR STAGING AND THAT CONCENTRATION OF AIRCRAFT SUCH AS TO PROVIDE SUITABLE BOMBING TARGET SEEMED UNLIKELY.

I PROPOSED IN FUTURE THAT MATTER BE LIFTED TO HIGHER LEVEL AND CONSIDERED PART OF BROADER QUESTION OF RETAINING CONTROL OF AIR OVER TAIWAN STRAIT WHICH ESSENTIAL TO DEFENSE OF TAIWAN AS WELL AS KINMEN AND MATSU. I ASSUMED RESPONSIBLE GRC AND US AIR FORCE COMMANDERS WOULD CONTINUE CLOSE CONSULTATION AS SITUATION DEVELOPED AND WOULD MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS RE ANY APPROPRIATE ACTION TO MEET GIVEN SITUATION AS IT AROSE. I ASSUMED IN THIS CONNECTION THERE WOULD BE PRIOR CONSULTATION WITH US BEFORE ANY OFFENSIVE ACTION TAKEN.

IN REPLY PRESIDENT CHIANG TOOK NOTE OF US POSITION. WHILE HE DID NOT (REPEAT NOT) NOW WISH TO ALTER WHAT HE SAID DURING ADMIRAL STUMP'S VISIT, HE THOUGH MATTER COULD BE LEFT IN ABEYANCE. HE INDICATED AGREEMENT WITH MY PROPOSAL THAT QUESTION BE CONSIDERED HEREAFTER IN BROADER TERMS OF MAINTAINING CONTROL OF AIR OVER STRAIT.

RANKIN

EAG

NOTE: PASSED CINCPAC 6/15/55-10:15 A.M. NJP